

1    What is claimed is:

1            1.    A method of displaying states of a peripheral data storage system  
2    comprising a data storage device, a data storage system controller, a user-actuated  
3    signaling subsystem, a user display subsystem adapted to display the states, and a  
4    peripheral data storage controller host interface adapted for communication with a host  
5    system, the method comprising:

6                        determining a state of the peripheral data storage system;  
7                        displaying a first display state via the user display subsystem if the  
8    peripheral data storage system is in an idle state;  
9                        displaying a second display state via the user display subsystem if the  
10   peripheral data storage system is in a state corresponding to receiving a signal  
11   from the user-actuated signaling subsystem;  
12                        displaying a third display state via the user display subsystem if the  
13   peripheral data storage system is in a dynamically active state; and  
14                        displaying a fourth display state via the user display subsystem if the  
15   peripheral data storage system is in an off state.

1            2.    The method of claim 1, wherein the user display subsystem comprises an  
2    electro-mechanical switch for at least one of a turning power on and off to the peripheral  
3    data storage system.

1            3.    The method of claim 2, wherein the user display subsystem comprises a  
2    user-visible display device adapted to display the first, second and third display states in  
3    the form of a first, a second and a third displaying of emitted light.

1            4.    The method of claim 3, wherein the user-visible display device comprises  
2    an alpha-numeric display adapted to display the first, second, and third display states in  
3    the form of a first, a second and a third displaying of alpha-numeric characters.

1            5.    The method of claim 3, wherein the first displaying of emitted light  
2    comprises a continuous displaying of emitted light.

1            6.    The method of claim 3, wherein the second displaying of emitted light  
2    comprises a first flashing pattern.

1            7.    The method of claim 3, wherein the third displaying of emitted light  
2    comprises a second flashing pattern.

1        8.     The method of claim 7, wherein the second flashing pattern comprises an  
2 aperiodic flashing pattern.

1        9.     The method of claim 3, wherein the fourth display state comprises an  
2 absence of emitted light.

1        10.    The method of claim 1, wherein the received signal corresponds to a first  
2 user-inputted request for at least one of a mounting and dismounting of the peripheral data  
3 storage system.

1        11.    The method of claim 1, wherein the received signal corresponds to a second  
2 user-inputted request for performing a task corresponding to a host-scheduled backup  
3 operation for a scheduled backing up of data to the peripheral data storage system.

1        12.    The method of claim 1, wherein the received signal corresponds to a third  
2 user-inputted request for performing an on-demand backing up of pre-selected data to the  
3 peripheral data storage system.

1        13.    The method of claim 1, wherein the off state corresponds to an off state of  
2 the data storage device.

1        14.    The method of claim 1, wherein displaying a second display state further comprises:  
2            communicating the received signal to the host system via the host interface;  
3            receiving an acknowledgement signal from the host system in response to  
4            the communicating;

5            switching the user display subsystem from the first display state to the  
6            second display state in response to the received acknowledgement signal;

7            receiving a first signal from the host system;

8            switching the user display subsystem from the second display state to the  
9            third display state in response to the received first signal;

10           receiving a second signal from the host system; and

11           switching the user display subsystem from the third display state to at least  
12           one of the first display state and the fourth display state in response to the received  
13           second signal.

1        15.    The method of claim 10, wherein the user-actuated signaling subsystem  
2 comprises a first electro-mechanical switch adapted to receive the first user-inputted

3 request and wherein the user-actuated signaling subsystem is adapted to generate the  
4 received signal based on the first user-inputted request.

1 16. The method of claim 11, wherein the user-actuated signaling subsystem  
2 comprises a second electro-mechanical switch adapted to receive the second user-inputted  
3 request and wherein the user-actuated signaling subsystem is adapted to generate the  
4 received signal based on the second user-inputted request.

1 17. The method of claim 12, wherein the user-actuated signaling subsystem  
2 comprises a third electro-mechanical switch adapted to receive the third user-inputted  
3 request and wherein the user-actuated signaling subsystem is adapted to generate the  
4 received signal based on the third user-inputted request.

1 18. The method of claim 1, wherein the peripheral data storage controller host  
2 interface is adapted for communication with the host system via at least one of a universal  
3 serial bus (USB) cable and a Firewire™ cable.

1 19. The method of claim 1, wherein the peripheral data storage system  
2 comprises a disk drive system and wherein the data storage device is a disk drive.